

Springfield, PA – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) has long noted that our nation's first responders have chosen a profession that is unique from many others, as it is truly characterized by the "dignity of danger." First responders daily put their own lives on the line to protect their neighbors and ensure that our communities are kept safe.

Today, Congressman Sestak had the honor of joining some of these first responders at the Delaware County Police Chief's Association 79th Annual Banquet and Installation of Officers. There, Chief Gean Guarneri was installed as the organization's president.

"Chief Guarneri has set a tremendous example of public service," said Congressman Sestak "I thank Chief Guarneri for his dedication to our community. He and those gathered here today epitomize the dignity of danger, and I will continue to vote for legislation that supports our nation's first responders."

Also in attendance was Wild Bill Guarneri from the Band of Brothers. "Wild Bill," the name given by his war comrades, was a member of the 101st Airborne, 506th P.I.R. Easy Company, United States Army. Fighting valiantly in World War II, his service was commemorated in the HBO Mini-series, "Band of Brothers," which Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg released.

Displaying his concern about crime in the District, Congressman Sestak explained, "maintaining an active relationship with District Police Officers is vital to ensure our community's safety. Staying abreast of the issues allows me to provide them with the resources necessary to combat crime effectively and efficiently. This focus is imperative, because criminal cases...have increased by 30 percent in the past four years in the Delaware County Common Pleas Courts. As a result, I plan to support the re-introduction of the Assault Weapons Ban that expired in 2004. The former legislation, enacted in 1994, demonstrably reduced crime's occurrence: according to the Brady Center's 2004 study, since the Act became law, assault weapons banned by name in the Act have declined from almost 5% of guns traced to crime in the pre-ban period to only 1.6% in the years following the ban—a decline of 66%; and, murders of police by offenders with assault weapons declined from 16 percent of gun murders of police in 1994 and early 1995 to zero percent in the latter half of 1995 to 1996."

While these statistics reflect national data, the crime statistics from the 7th District lend more credence to the Assault Weapons Ban necessity. Firearms purchased from "Letal Lou's Pawn

Shop" in the district have been used to commit at least 19 homicides and 65 aggravated assaults in Philadelphia during 2003 and 2005. Armed robberies involving firearms have already increased by 10% from 2007 to October of 2008 in Chester County; Coatesville City, alone, exhibited a 28% increase from 2007.

Demonstrating his staunch commitment to the reduction of violence, Congressman Joe Sestak submitted the Elder Abuse Victims Act to address the unacceptable problem of elder abuse in the United States. Last session, the Congressman's legislation on this topic was the first House hearing on elder abuse and the first legislation on elder abuse to pass the House of Representatives in 17 years. By providing increased funding for more effective law enforcement and prosecution of elder abuse, the bill aims to reduce the increasing rate of physical, emotional and financial harm, neglect and exploitation of the elderly, while ensuring that perpetrators are properly punished.

Further, working with the Crime Victim's Center in November, 2008, Congressman Sestak voted in favor of HRes 590, which supports the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. He also support HR 4120, the Effective Child Pornography Prosecution Act of 2007, which would strengthen prosecution and distribution of child pornography by closing a legal loophole that allowed a Kansas man convicted of possessing child pornography to escape punishment. Additionally, the Congressman supported the initial version of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2008 which would have appropriated \$10,000,000 for sex offender management measures such as monitoring.

Following the meeting, Congressman Sestak extended his position, "eliminating crime in the District will contribute to the community's security and comfort. It is my objective to see greater levels of trust, companionship, and unity proliferate throughout the counties. A significant step towards the realization of this goal is an assurance that our streets and homes will be safe; free from crime."

On February 8, 2009, the Congressman will host a First Responders Grants and Appropriations Seminar to inform individuals involved with emergency services in his District about opportunities to seek project funding at the state and federal levels at the Manoa Fire Company.

Important Upcoming Events

Grant Symposiums

Congressman Joe Sestak has scheduled forums to provide important information about obtaining federal, state and private resources. At the forums, Congressman Sestak will give an overview of the appropriations process and discuss the importance of, as well as best practices for, applying for all types of grants. In addition, he will provide a copy of the Second Edition of

the Pennsylvania 7th Congressional District Grant and Resource Directory, a one-stop shop for learning about opportunities to secure project funding. Last year's edition was the first known to be compiled by a Congressional office.

Meeting for all interested private individuals and private, non-profit, and other organizations:

Special meeting for First Responders:

Manoa Fire Company
115 S. Eagle Rd
Havertown, Pa. 19063
February 8th
2-3PM

If you have questions regarding the event, please call Susan Heppler at 610-892-8623 or susan.heppler@mail.house.gov

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Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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